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State Department review completed

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NEAR EAST - AFRICA

2. Comment on scheduled meeting to implement Arab Collective Security Pact:

The Lebanese announcement of 20 May that the Arab chiefs of staff will meet in Damascus on 25 June to implement the Arab Collective Security Pact is a severe blow to Western plans for the Middle East Defense Organization.

The pact was ratified last fall, but its enforcement was delayed because of Egypt's belief that it might interfere with the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations. At the Arab foreign ministers' meeting in Cairo on 10 May, Egypt, after announcing indefinite suspension of the talks with Britain, joined in calling for immediate establishment of organizations provided for in the pact.

Implementation of the pact would not give the Middle East an effective defense system, but it would encourage Arab leaders to insist that MEDO be dropped and that the West cooperate with the Arab defense plan.

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3. Egypt reportedly takes special measures to protect foreign community:

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The Egyptian police and army have been ordered to take extraordinary measures to protect the large foreign community in Alexandria, [redacted]

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[redacted] The government-sponsored National Liberation Organization has also been ordered to help maintain order in Alexandria. Members of the banned Wafd party are to be carefully watched for any attempt to incite disturbances.

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The British ambassador is not worried at this juncture about possible acts of violence against the British by the government but rather that the Moslem Brotherhood, the Wafd or the Communists might use violence to create difficulties for the government.

Comment: General Nagib has assured Secretary Dulles that he would prevent disorder at least until after the secretary has a chance to discuss the situation in Washington.

There are approximately 88,000 foreign residents in Alexandria, which represents 13 percent of the total population. They include large numbers of Greek and Italian as well as British subjects.

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WESTERN EUROPE

5. Ulbricht leadership held confirmed in East Germany:

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American officials in Berlin believe that the dominant position of Deputy Premier Walter Ulbricht in East Germany was reconfirmed by the dismissal last week of Franz Dahlem from the politburo and central committee of the Socialist Unity Party. No immediate shift in top party or government leadership, or in Soviet policy toward Germany, is foreseen. There may, however, be a purge trial which, like that of Slansky in Czechoslovakia, would emphasize security against "foreign imperialism."

Comment: Ulbricht's success in maintaining his position seems to imply the continuation of the policy of rapid communization in East Germany with which he is most closely associated.

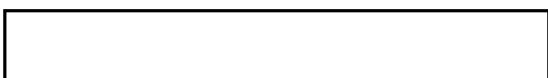
6. French oppose any relaxation of Czech overflight prohibition:

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The French government is seriously concerned that Oatis' release may result in American consent to Czech overflights of West Germany.

In a note delivered to the American embassy on 20 May, France points out that it could not now agree to overflights without appearing to abandon the case for two French citizens still

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imprisoned in Czechoslovakia. France also wishes to avoid giving the impression that the joint Franco-American representations to Prague in 1951 over issues which included the Oatis case were merely the result of United States pressure.

Comment: France has steadfastly refused since the overflight ban to allow the Czechs to use Paris as the terminus of their proposed air route from Prague via Denmark and the Low Countries.

Both Belgium and the Netherlands plan to accede eventually to Czech pressure in order to safeguard their own scheduled flights to Prague. Air France, however, has not served Prague since early 1952.